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Atlantic Flyway Review: Spring 2013- Crown Point State Historic Site

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Crown Point State Historic Site 440-0732

Essex County, NY

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The 2013 spring Crown Point Banding Station began operations on 3 May, continuing through the morning of 19 May. This was the 38th consecutive year of operation on the grounds of the 360-ac Crown Point State Historic Site. The Crown Point Banding Association (CPBA) operates the station through an agreement with the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation and under a permit from the NYS Department of Environment Conservation. The station is located on the Crown Point Peninsula - Lake Champlain, west of His Majesty's Fort in the hawthorn-juniper thickets. Banders participating this year were: Ted Hicks, Gordon Howard, Gary Lee, Mike Peterson and Nina Schoch.

	Species	# Banded	% SY	% ASY	% AHY
1.	Yellow-rumped Warbler	93	55.0%	43.0%	2.0%
2.	White-throated Sparrow	34	18.0	82	0
3.	Blue Jay	20	55	45	0
4.	Gray Catbird	19	42	58	0
5.	Common Yellowthroat	19	32	58	10
6.	American Robin	15	47	47	6
7.	Yellow Warbler	13	13	77	0
8.	Western Palm Warbler	9	67	33	0
9.	American Redstart	9	0	100	0
10.	Baltimore Oriole	8	75	25	0

The station banded one new species this year, a Carolina Wren, bringing the total number of species banded to 106 since the station's inception in 1976. This was the first Carolina Wren observed on the Crown Point Peninsula, much less the first banded. However, Carolina Wren has been documented on the nearby mainland since 1981. Individuals banded were 332 (down from 552 during the same period in 2012) of 53 species (down from 62 species

from the previous year). Station returns were 12, down from 18 in 2012. A total of 17,374 birds have been banded since the station's inception in 1976. The median for the annual species count is 50, while the mean is 45. The median annual number of the birds banded count is 413 and the mean is 458.

Between 17 and 18 nets were operated for a total of 3438 b/100nh, down from 3810 in 2012. Two Potter traps accounted for less than .05% of the captures. The new bird capture rate of b/100nhs was 10, down from 15 in 2012. A surprise Potter trap capture was a Veery.

In 2011, the Yellow-rumped Warbler count plummeted from 221 in 2010 to 10. In 2012, 227 were banded; this year only 97 were banded. Blue Jays banded in 2011 were 84, three in 2012 and 20 this year. Only one of those 84 has been recaptured (2012) at the station. A station record of 106 banded Black-capped Chickadees in 2011 dropped to 10 in 2012 and to three in 2013. None of those 106 has been recaptured. A Black-capped Chickadee (female) banded in 2006 was recaptured. It has been recaptured each year since 2006, save for 2008. It was 7 yr 11 mo old.

At set-up, the region around the station had seen little precipitation. One net location, fondly called "The Swamp", typically has standing water in some places. For the entire banding session, the swamp nets could be worked without rubber boots – a first. While the trees were bare at setup, for the most part the first week's sunny weather with highs near 80 quickly brought out the leaves. Temperatures were above seasonal averages and there was only one really wet day. Winds were persistently southerly.

The first week was slow, to say the least, averaging four birds a day. The second week started well with a spurt of 68 birds on 10 May and 28 on 11 May. Then the counts declined into the teens until the total count for the two day period, 16 May (49) and 17 May (61), was 110 birds. Another decline ensued. High count days were: 10 May, 20.5%; 16 May, 14.8%; 17 May, 18.4%. The lowest count day was 5 May with two birds or 0.6%.

There were 13 station returns of seven species: Baltimore Oriole, four; Black-capped Chickadee, Brown-headed Cowbird and American Goldfinch two, and one each for Barn Swallow, Warbling Vireo and Song Sparrow.

Notable returns were: A 2006 Black-capped Chickadee female 7 yr 11 mo; a 2010 American Goldfinch male 3 yr 11 mo; and a 2011 Baltimore Oriole male 3 yr 11 mo.

Warbler species numbered 15 for the fourth consecutive year. Yellow-rumped Warblers (93) and Common Yellowthroats (19) were banded on seven days. Yellow Warblers (13) were banded on six days. A station record of nine Western Palm Warblers was set, while Yellow Palm Warblers (two) tied the station record. Two Black-throated Blue Warblers, missing last year, were captured this year. Another regular, Ovenbird, was not captured for the second year in a row.

In 2010, many birds had ticks. While the subsequent years saw few ticks on birds, this year saw many ticks on the banders—not a welcome trend.

Notwithstanding the late spring indicator, trees barely leafed out but by 10 May, the hawthorn trees were well advanced. Moth larvae, which hatch in the hawthorn leaf buds, had grown to nearly an inch long and had begun to descend to the ground on their silk threads by the end of the first week of operation. They are a staple food for the warblers, orioles and other bird species. This is the second year in a row that this food source has been out of synchronization with the timing of the migration.

Three school groups visited the banding station this year, along with three other organizations, for a total visitation of 168 people. Some made multiple visits. This year the furthest travelers came from Lubbock, TX. Additionally, there was a radio/webpage story produced about the station.

The Crown Point Banding Association is an independent, participant-funded, peer-managed, volunteer organization. Station personnel numbered 18 this year. Special thanks are due to Gary Lee, who stayed at the station 24/7 for the duration of the

banding operation, Tom Barber for missing only two nights of camping, net raising and lowering, and to founder J.M.C. (Mike) Peterson for his foresight in establishing the banding station and the use of his equipment. The following people assisted the banders with the transport and set-up/take-down of the station, net checking, etc.: Mary Brandt, Sophie Brandt, Eberhardt Burkowski, Wendy Burkowski; Colvin, Glen, Malinda and Riley Chapman, Brenna Corey, Mary Curtis, Lisley Fisher, Susan French, Ellie George, Judith Heintz, Liana, Lois Glenn and Michael Karp, Elizabeth Lee, JoAnne McKenzie, Jim Otto, Molly Proper, Erika Walsh, Vince Walsh, and Annette Yardan. We thank all who helped and all who made donations in support of the station. We give special thanks to Karin Emmons, Media Resource Specialist of the Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management, Clemson University, for her assistance with our education program, materials development, and out-reach program.

We are indebted to the fine staff at the Crown Point State Historic Site and the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation for allowing us to continue to collect data on the site. Thomas Hughes, the Site Manager, has been extremely supportive of our program. Additionally, Jake Putnam has been instrumental in seeing that our site preparation and maintenance needs are met. The interpretive staff have been wonderful in directing our visitors to the station and in informing other Historic Site visitors about our program. This year the Crown Point State Historic Site celebrates its 103rd year of operation. We are pleased to have been associated with the site for over one-third of its history.

Lewiston Banding Station

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The spring 2013 banding season got started on 30 Apr with a total of four birds being caught using 15 mist nets. The weather allowed me to start right on schedule but did not produce any great results.